



## *Western Adventures and Washington Maneuvers 1916*

The whirling social life with Mather stopped when he left on his travels. There were short trips to New York, Boston, and Chicago, but then he was out west most of the remaining time until September, drumming up publicity or working on concession problems.

Toward the end of 1915, Mather had let Daniels go and closed his office. Then, on December 11, 1915, he appointed Bob Marshall as superintendent of national parks and Joe Cotter, who had been Lane's secretary, assistant general superintendent. Not knowing how Marshall would work out, Mather had him merely take a leave of absence from the Geological Survey.

Marshall knew parks well and was intensely anxious to be the director of the Park Service should it be created. So Mather had him oversee the *field* operations of the parks and monuments. His work sent him on the road in the spring, and he too remained out west for most of 1916.

Lane found Cotter almost indispensable and used him in his office most of the time. Mather told me that I was to concentrate on getting the bill to establish a national park service through the Congress. This was to be my main goal. "Don't let a lot of little things get in your way and take up your time," he said.

In recognition of my expanded work load, on May 16, 1916, Lane elevated me to assistant attorney for the Department of the Interior and raised my salary to two thousand dollars per year. With all this, I still had

a secretary only when I could beg, borrow, or steal one from some office, or Bob Yard would lend me his secretary, the one Mather paid for. When I was desperate, I occasionally had help from the people Marshall "borrowed" from the Geological Survey, Arthur Demaray and Isabelle Story. Even so, I had to answer a good portion of the correspondence or write reports on my own typewriter at night, or whenever I had a free moment.

*Here is where my best friend and companion came in, for Grace began to spend long hours at the office with me, filing, pasting material in scrapbooks, just about anything to keep my head above water. No pay, of course. She even wrote a college thesis—type paper on the history of the Interior Department for Secretary Lane but signed it H. M. Albright. She gave up most of her social life and even more gladly gave up sightseeing and lectures. Her only break was when her mother and sister came for a six-week visit. They also made a trip to New York, Grace's fast.*

Many people had believed in and promoted a separate administration of the national park system ever since the artist George Catlin had first uttered the words "national park" far back in the nineteenth century. Legislation had been introduced time and again in the early years of the twentieth century. President William Howard Taft and his two able interior secretaries, Richard Ballinger and Walter Fisher, were active promoters of a national park service.

The president stated firmly in a special message to the Congress on February 2, 1912: "I earnestly recommend the establishment of a Bureau of National Parks. Such legislation is essential to the proper management of those wondrous manifestations of nature, so startling and so beautiful that everyone recognizes the obligations of the Government to preserve them for the edification and recreation of the people." Fisher strenuously followed this up and almost succeeded in getting a bill passed.

Although this bill failed, I recalled Fisher's words time and again when we were in conference on our 1916 bill: "Our whole park system has been more or less an accident. . . . There has been no coordination between parks. Congress each year makes appropriations for each particular park as it comes along. The local pressure, the pressure of the particular individuals or organizations that are interested in it, determines in each case what amount of money shall be appropriated. . . . If we worked out a problem with one park, it was always a mere chance if the results benefited any other."

We couldn't openly state it, but we felt that the perpetual defeat of a park service was due to the unrelenting pressure of Gifford Pinchot and

his influence on the Forest Service. Pinchot always believed the Forest Service should take over the national park areas.

Superintendent conferences had been convened in 1911 and 1912 in which a variety of interested individuals and organizations had promoted a park service. One of the most prominent was the American Civic Association and its president, J. Horace McFarland. He was knowledgeable, articulate, energetic, and like a bulldog in his tenacity to make "*1916 the year to win*" the slogan he wrote on notes to me. In Washington he was my main contact outside the members of the congressional committees.

The atmosphere seemed different when the Sixty-fourth Congress convened in December 1915. Although John Raker had introduced park bills in 1912 and 1913, which had died in committee, he was ready to try again. But James R. Mann, House Republican minority leader from Mather's own district in Illinois, couldn't swallow Raker, thoroughly disliked the California Democrat, and stated openly he would never support any bill Raker introduced.

Raker presented his bill, H.R. 434, anyway, partly because of Mann but partly because his name was smeared with Hetch Hetchy. He always felt badly about his part in promoting Hetch Hetchy and hoped he could redeem himself by pushing through a national park service bill with his name attached. All Mann and others thought was: "What was this? A fellow who helped destroy part of Yosemite is now mothering a national parks bureau?"

In the meantime, McFarland and the American Civic Association had approached Representative William Kent, a Progressive Republican from California, to introduce a bill. Kent was the man who had donated Muir Woods to the government for a national monument. Coming back from California, late for the opening of the congressional session, he introduced his own park bill, H.R. 8668, not knowing Raker had already done the same. As it later turned out, this gave us the opportunity to rewrite the bills to remove some provisions that had led to defeat in the past. Our co-sponsor in the Senate was Reed Smoot of Utah.

Hearings on the two bills, Raker's H.R. 434 and Kent's H.R. 8668, were held in April 1916 by the twenty-one-member House Committee on Public Lands, chaired by Representative Scott Ferris of Oklahoma. Fortunately, we had a fair number of supporters: Edward Taylor of Colorado, Carl Hayden of Arizona, Louis Cramton of Michigan, and of course the triumvirate from California—Raker, Church, and Kent. American Civic Association officials McFarland and Richard B. Watrous

gave powerful testimony and were followed by Mather, Marshall, and Yard. Marshall was questioned mainly on the cost of the parks and what appropriations would be involved if the new system came about.

One committee member, Irvine Lenroot of Wisconsin, was deeply opposed to more bureaucracy. Since Wilson had become president, whole new sectors of government had been created to deal with the Sixteenth Amendment and the income tax, the Federal Reserve System, and tougher antitrust laws. Fortunately, Raker sort of sidetracked that sticky problem by making a statement of his own to close that particular session.

There were other hearings, of course, in both the House and Senate. The latter were short and pleasant. The chairman, Henry Myers of Montana, was very pro-parks. To iron out some of the language problems and strike out items that seemed potentially troublesome, an important change took place. With the approval of Raker and Kent, a substitute bill, H.R. 15522, was introduced to replace the original bills.

During these months, there were numerous meetings with a fluctuating group of men: Mather, Kent, Raker, Yard, Marshall, McFarland, Watrous, Grosvenor, various other members of Congress, and people who came to Washington on visits or offered suggestions by mail, such as Mills, Colby, and Osborn. I don't think I missed a meeting, since I was "keeper of the stacks of papers," as someone called me. Our meetings were held at various places: Kent's or Yard's home, a congressman's office, the Cosmos Club, the National Geographic Society offices.

From the beginning, the general outline for the legislation was known to all, a pickup from former bills. When we had the chance to write a new bill from the Raker and Kent bills, however, there was a split over how specific to be. Some favored carefully spelling everything out in detail. Most, though, felt the bill should be somewhat vague. Congressmen have a tendency to nail down ideas with carefully worded clauses, their own or those favored by their constituents or vested interests. We didn't want endless specifics. Specifics are too hard to reach agreement on. Also, knowing Mather and I would at least start up the organization before leaving the government to go our separate ways, the majority expressed the hope that we could institute the ideals and plans we all had discussed and agreed on. These might not be adopted if the organic act was too narrow and specific.

There has been a persistent question through the years about whether we were aware of and discussed the paradox of use and enjoyment of the

parks by the people versus their preservation "unimpaired." Of course, we knew there was this paradox, but the organic acts creating Yellowstone, Yosemite, and other parks always contained these opposite tenets. We felt it was understood to be the standing policy.

The same is true of wilderness: we didn't specifically state policy about wilderness at this time because we concluded it was understood. Every previous act demanded that the parks be preserved in their natural state. Their natural state was wilderness. That was why the 1916 act made no provision for roads, trails, buildings, or anything else—only that concessions could be granted.

The general philosophy of the time was "use." Resources were to be used. There'd always be more. Men like Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot were for "preservation with use." Hence the national forest idea. Our group and followers were conservationists and preservationists. No use of resources, no change in the general state of national park areas. But roads to enjoy the outstanding, easy-to-visit features of a park while leaving most areas in wilderness, accommodations for the people of all incomes in a wide price range, conveniences for health and safety.

We recognized that the introduction of automobiles would vastly increase the visitation to the parks and their use. However, we also knew the Congress would count tourist visitation to decide how much money our bureau would get to operate the park system. Dollars would be doled out according to the number of visitors.

Knowing we couldn't read the future was another reason for a nonspecific organic act. Obviously we could never foresee the future population of our country or the rabid demand for recreation. The belief in 1916 was that education and passive enjoyment were the foremost reasons for the parks. We realized that time could and would change conditions, so we didn't want ourselves or future park officials to be stymied by tight restrictions.

In May 1916 H.R. 15522 was reported favorably out of the House committee, although Lenroot stuck to his guns about bureaucracy, and much to our surprise our friend Edward Taylor joined Lenroot in voting against it. Taylor explained: "The great stumbling block is that the members of Congress fear you are building up another bureau here that will start in a small way and soon get up to a big appropriation."

That's the way matters stood when the infamous Washington heat and humidity set in. Grace and I worked together a good portion of the

days. Then we would walk home after work and climb the four flights of stairs to our suffocating little apartment. It was often so hot that my bride simply couldn't, or wouldn't, cook, so we went out for dinner to a place called Wallis's. Later, when the temperature soared to around the hundred-degree mark, we switched to the more expensive restaurant in the Hotel Occidental, which charged \$1.25 for a complete meal and even had ceiling fans. Many times our older and more affluent friends had us over for dinner, obviously feeling sorry for us. Aside from these little dinners, our social activities almost came to a halt. There was little time for anything besides work.

At last the park service bill proceeded to the House for a full vote. There was more debate than we had counted on. The two sticky points were Lenroot's bureaucracy and a last-minute add-on by Kent to allow grazing in the national parks. Lenroot's Wisconsin colleague, William Henry Stafford, hated almost everything, but he hated red tape, paperwork and bureaucracy the worst. We heard plenty about these at the time, but even more later. Now a simple amendment severely restricted the amount of money for the bureau headquarters and personnel in Washington.

As for grazing, Mather himself had a lot to do with this problem. During his appearance before the committee, he had been ambiguous. One time he intimated he was against grazing, but at other times he spoke clearly for it. Nicholas Sinnott of Oregon had proposed an amendment that stated: "The Secretary of the Interior may grant the privilege to graze live-stock within any national park, monument, or reservation when, in his judgement, such business is not detrimental to the primary purpose for which the reservations were created, namely for the enjoyment of the people and the preservation of the vegetable life and other national features." When asked about this, Mather replied: "We feel that in certain portions of the present parks and in other parks, which may be later created, that the opportunity to graze under such restrictions should be allowed."

Yard, McFarland, and I were sitting together at the hearing when Mather uttered these words and then went on replying to more questions in the same vein. He even stated about Sequoia: "The greater part of the [new proposed] park area is being used for grazing and could continue to be used by stockmen. It would be our idea, say in a beautiful meadow, to fence off certain portions that the campers could use. We can provide for the campers and increase the facilities for campers as they

come in larger numbers, at the same time taking care to protect the interest of the stockmen."

Frankly, we were stunned, for we thought grazing was anathema to everyone in our conservationist group. Later, when we asked Mather why he took that stand, he answered that he felt that grazing had to be in the bill to get it passed; that he had already sanctioned, or rather hadn't changed, the existing policy of allowing grazing in Mesa Verde, Yosemite, and Sequoia; and that ideals had to be stretched sometimes to reach an immediate goal. He had been afraid that Kent would be angered if opposed and that Raker would turn on him if he came out forcefully against certain other practices in the parks. Raker was pushing to change Lassen National Monument to a national park, but leaving in clauses to allow a railroad, grazing, and other adverse uses. Mather let it become a park on August 9, 1916, under those conditions. It seemed bad enough at the time to have a pro-grazing stand attached to the not-yet-created park service, but later it became a real nightmare for me during the war.

One more thing we thought had been settled in the committee hearings was the transfer of national monuments in the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior when a national park bureau was created. There were national monuments in three departments—War, Agriculture, and Interior. The War Department had the military areas, but there was a fine line as to others. They had all been in the Interior Department until 1905, when the Forest Service was created and placed in the Department of Agriculture on Gifford Pinchot's demand. As Mather commented before the committee: "If a monument comes from public lands, it's Interior; if it comes from Forests, it's Agriculture."

But what about the Grand Canyon or Mount Olympus, superb natural-wonder Forest Service monuments? It was obvious that Grand Canyon had to be a national park, but Mount Olympus was something else, for President Wilson had carved it in half to accommodate mining interests. This had so angered Raker that, in his H.R. 434, there had been specific language to transfer these areas, and a hint of others, to the park service.

Well, the chief forester, Henry Graves, stated: "We are heartily in favor of the establishment of a National Park Service," and he admitted that those two monuments should go under the jurisdiction of Interior when they became parks. However, he insisted that language even hinting that all Forest Service monuments might go to the park service be stricken from the bill.

Earlier Mather had been almost indifferent to the monuments and had told the committee: "There has been very little done to the national monuments. Under the law little or nothing can be done with them; they are simply set aside, presumably, until such time as Congress decides to develop them." Now, in his most soothing and ingratiating manner, Mather tossed the monument issue to one side by assuring everyone that he wasn't concerned with monuments. "We focus our attention continually on the parks and don't eye any of the Forest Service monuments except those mentioned." He later laughed to us, "Well, at least, not right now."

Much as we would have enjoyed taking all the monuments, we kept quiet and let the members of Congress squash this. And they did.

On July 1, 1916, the House of Representatives passed our bill with only Lenroot's frugal amendment and Kent's grazing proposal appearing to pose some problems. The Senate followed suit on August 5. The two bills had to be reconciled by a joint conference. Now the real work was to begin.

In the midst of all the Washington work and conferences on the national park service bill, I received a telegram from Mather, followed by a long letter. He had again become vitally concerned with the Park-to-Park Highway and planned a trip to Yellowstone to go over the route from Thermopolis to Cody and thence around the park. He was intensely interested in how the traffic pattern of cars and stages was working out. He wanted to take a party of friends along and instructed me to precede him, arrange transportation, and be on call to take care of his guests. Incidentally, I was also to make a thorough inspection of the park and write a full report to Marshall on the conditions.

I wrote back suggesting that as long as Marshall was already out west, why didn't he just come to Yellowstone and make the inspection himself. An instant telegram came back: "No, Horace, you do it."

So I went west on July 16, leaving my bride behind to fend for herself for the first time. Passing through Denver, I arranged for two touring cars to come to Thermopolis, Wyoming, to carry the Mather party through Yellowstone. But I went ahead, arriving in Thermopolis on the morning of July 19.

Except for the one thousand inhabitants of Thermopolis, the average person could have zipped through town and never known it existed—that is, except for Mather and the Park-to-Park Highway Commission. It was important to them because this highway was to pass through the town on

its way from Denver to Yellowstone, and Mather thought the hot springs here could be developed into a northern version of the Arkansas Hot Springs.

My two-day inspection of the roads and natural phenomena in the area was a varied experience. It was most assuredly no Hot Springs. It had no fancy Fordyce Bath House or other trappings of wealth seen in that Arkansas city. But I was surprised to see the brightly colored hot mineral terraces and streams of boiling water that serviced the highly touted bathing area. They were so like Yellowstone's Mammoth.

Then there was the amazing sight of the Bighorn River serenely flowing through town, after suddenly carving out the awesome chasm through the Owl Creek Mountains. This area became known as the Wedding of the Waters, for it was the same river with only a name change from the Wind to the Bighorn.

That was the good news. There was also the bad news: the odd wildlife "zoo" (with aroma rising from a handful of moth-eaten elk, deer, bison, a mother bear, and two cubs); the raw, hot, dust-laden wind that blew incessantly; and the bug-ridden hotel.

On July 21 Mather's party, including his wife and a number of personal and official friends, arrived on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. The chauffeur-driven, seven-passenger White touring cars I had ordered from Denver were brought around, and off we went to Cody for the night at Buffalo Bill Cody's Irma Hotel.

At Mather's instructions the party split up. The route I was to take was the Grass Creek oil field road via Meeteetse, while Mather and the main party would take the one recommended by his Denver Park-to-Park-Highway friends. Our road was passable but had few directional signs, some of which pointed in the wrong direction. Mather's road turned out to be simply terrible, full of ruts, dusty enough to strangle a person, and forty miles longer.

I was sitting in the Irma Hotel, at the famous bar given to Buffalo Bill by Queen Victoria, drinking a long cold lemonade, when my chief and his exhausted group staggered in about 7:00 P.M. We assembled for dinner at the Irma, mainly because it was apparently the only place to eat. It turned out to be a disaster, with bad food and terrible service.

Halfway through the meal, Mather told me to go out and check the kitchen. It was about the dirtiest, most unsanitary place I had ever seen. After I had reported in detail what I had observed, Mather summarily

called in the manager, read the riot act to him, and told him a full report would be made to Wyoming congressmen as well as Secretary Lane of the Interior Department.

The rest of the evening turned out to be equally bad. First of all, Mrs. Mather insisted on sitting up all night in the lobby after she discovered "things crawling in the bed." Mather ordered a pillow and blankets for her, saw to her comfort, and then disappeared back to the lice, bedbugs, or whatever.

He didn't last long there because when he opened the door to his room he found two men asleep in his bed. Downstairs at the desk, he demanded another room. "There is no other room," said the clerk. "You'll just have to make your bedfellows move over."

Thoroughly enraged, Mather went to locate me. He found me rolled up in a blanket on the floor. About eleven o'clock I had been awakened by some strange man crawling into my bed, falling asleep immediately, and giving off the loudest snores I'd ever heard. Lying there awake, I had become aware of various bugs that had missed Mrs. Mather, so I had chosen the floor over the bed.

Now Mather and I together attacked the surly clerk. He finally disposed of us in "The Annex," a dilapidated building a block or so from the Irma, on cots without sheets, but also without bugs.

The Irma hadn't improved very much by morning. I was up at 5:30 A.M. to see how the tourists were handled when they came in by train from Billings, Montana. I rode the bus with them from the depot to the Irma. Arriving at the hotel, a lady asked where she could wash up before having breakfast. The desk clerk gave her a jerk of the thumb and a curt reply, "Head of the stairs." The lady picked up her heavy suitcase and was halfway up the long flight of stairs when a bellboy offered to help her. He escorted her to the second floor and down a long hall to the end of the building. Here he discovered he had taken her down the wrong hall. The washroom was at the end of the opposite hall. Though my first, this was certainly not the last of my unfortunate jousts with the Irma.

Our party breakfasted and was ready to go at 9:45 A.M. The road to Yellowstone was amazingly good compared to 1915. When we stopped to look at the Shoshone Dam, "The Sensation of the Cody Road," we found the gate locked. So we helped the ladies climb under some pipe bars while the men went over the gate to get to the steps leading down to the top of the dam.

Mather was furious about the situation. "It's dangerous. People could get killed. Break this whole thing open," he ordered. The chauffeur produced a hammer and began to break the padlock. Suddenly a caretaker appeared. Mather lectured him on the dangers of people circumventing the locks and had him finish destroying them. "And leave this gate open. No more locks, do you understand?" The poor fellow was quaking and never even questioned the authority of this distinguished-looking fellow who was ordering him around. As a parting shot, Mather called over his shoulder, "And get rid of those unsightly, dilapidated wooden buildings over there."

"Yes, sir, yes, sir, right away, sir" echoed after us.

Just before we reached the entrance to Yellowstone, Mather had us stop at the Pahaska Lodge, also owned and operated by Buffalo Bill Cody. It turned out to be just as bad as the Irma, if not worse. Lunch was one dollar, far too much for the horrible, greasy, inedible food served by loud, boisterous, grimy, but glitzy waitresses. Mather muttered to me, "Could Cody be operating a combination eating place and brothel?" After studying the situation, he ordered us not to eat a bite. He threw cash on the table (fifty cents per person) and stalked out, vowing to make the place change or he'd close it.

Of course, he had no more jurisdiction over the Pahaska than he had over the Shoshone Dam, but if he decided to do something, it got done. I had learned that much about Stephen Mather in the year and a half I'd been around him.

Leaving Pahaska, we drove to the Lake Hotel and thence through the Hayden Valley to the Canyon Hotel, where we were to spend the night. We "easterners" were very much excited to see large herds of elk in the Hayden Valley, deer grazing like tame sheep on the grassy slopes around the Canyon Hotel, and best of all roaming bears waiting for the nightly handout of carefully picked-over scraps of dining room food.

It was hard to imagine such ferocious animals as bears being so tame and so photogenic. But there were tourists outside the hotel snapping pictures right and left while bears sat up and acted like trained dogs. That is, I suppose, as long as the photographers were throwing pieces of candy bars and cookies to them. They looked mighty unreliable to me.

I always thought the Canyon Hotel one of the most beautiful in the world. Built during the fearful winter of 1910-11, it hugged the contour of the hill above and beyond the grand canyon of the Yellowstone River, though too far away to see the canyon itself. It was huge, a mile around,

and yet it blended as one into the landscape. The architect, Robert Reamer, who also designed the Lake and Old Faithful hotels, commented on this, his masterpiece: "I built it in keeping with the place where it stands. To be in discord with the landscape would be almost a crime." Inside it was equally breathtaking, especially the lounge, projecting forward from the main hotel two hundred by one hundred feet, with a grand staircase descending to lounge areas and, at night, a ballroom with soft, discreet lights and a dance orchestra.

What a relief it was that night to be in this beautiful, luxurious hotel, to eat in the lovely dining room with windows framing the vista toward the canyon, to luxuriate in clean bathrooms with large tubs of hot water, to sleep in comfortable beds with fresh sheets and Hudson Bay blankets, and with not a crawling thing in sight.

In Yellowstone our party covered all the roads on the so-called belt line, the circular route around the park. Mather led his party on the sight-seeing tour. Although I was with them most of the time, I traveled in another car, with Major Amos Fries, the army engineer officer in charge of road-building in the park. He poured out a flood of valuable information, from which I made copious notes and recommendations, such as signs that should be erected to locate and explain attractions to tourists, parapets that should be built at dangerous curves or precipices, hiking trails that must be constructed to scenic spots. Completely discontinue all stage traffic and institute bus transportation for tourists without their own cars. Move the administration building at Mammoth to where tourists can find it to get information or talk to officials. These notes were later incorporated in a full-scale report for Marshall.

John A. Hill, one of the Interior Department inspectors, had just completed a tour of the Yellowstone concessions, so Mather told me not to bother with them. However, my innate nose for details forced me to inspect every inch of the camps, hotels, boats, and public campgrounds anyway and enter it all into my final report.

Mather read my notes and found them most helpful when he cornered the concessioners in Mammoth just before we left the park. He weeded out some of them and came to a final conclusion that all lodging had to be consolidated under Harry Child and his Yellowstone Park Company. It didn't happen all at once, but it got underway at this time. Although most of the report dealt with roads and concessions, I also listed all the game I had seen and commented on birds, wild flowers, and trees.

On the morning of July 23 we set off from the hotel to tour the east side of the park. It was a glorious day, brilliant and a little cool, actually more than a little cool as we wound our way up the steep road to the top of Mount Washburn. On the north side of the mountain we had great difficulty getting around a huge snow bank just below the summit. Reaching the summit, everyone was awed by the view and had to have numerous pictures taken to prove we had made it. Then we came down the mountain and drove north through the lush Lamar Valley to the Buffalo Farm.

Here were kept a small herd of bison, around 280 nonnative transplants. The native species of bison, the last remnants of the millions that had once covered the Great Plains, were deliberately separated from the Buffalo Farm animals and roamed far off in the hills to the east. We all enjoyed seeing the great, shaggy beasts up close, no matter what the variety. And on the way back to the Canyon Hotel, driving through Dunraven Pass, we watched an enormous herd of elk slowly trail across a hillside.

On the twenty-fourth we again climbed into our White touring cars and took the so-called cutoff from Canyon to Old Faithful. Everything went smoothly until we arrived at Fountain. Now there had to be a decision on which of two roads we would follow to the Old Faithful Inn. Fries couldn't help in the decision, as he hadn't tried the one road himself. So Mather decided to have us take that unknown road while he and his group took the other.

Fries, Alexander Vogelsang (Interior Department solicitor), and I set off on the road to Upper Geyser Basin by way of Firehole Lake and the Fountain Geyser. There were no signs warning people not to use it, but there should have been. It was almost impassable. Sometimes high centers compelled us to run out in the woods instead of on the road. Then chuck holes, deep mud holes, and streams running across the road threatened to delay our progress almost every second. I was so battered, shaken up, and bad-tempered from the experience that I told Fries I would see to it that this road was closed immediately to automobiles and probably to all other transportation too, although sometime it ought to be constructed properly, as there were so many wonderful geyser formations and hot springs along the way.

Fortunately, Mather and party had taken the direct route through the forest and found that road in fine condition. We arrived at the wonderful, rustic Old Faithful Inn long after their group had enjoyed lunch. They were now out on a tour of Upper Geyser Basin with a young army

officer. Fries and I grabbed a bite to eat, inspected the camps and kitchens, watched Old Faithful erupt, and walked out to meet Mather's group when we saw them strolling across the basin toward the hotel.

Mrs. Mather and another lady vowed they couldn't go any farther without tea and nourishment. Giving them time to have tea, though, was a bad idea. We had to drive rather fast back to the Canyon Hotel, and no road in Yellowstone was really good enough for speeding. The rush was because Mather and I had to attend a meeting of the National Park-to-Park Highway Association that evening, and Mather was to be the principal speaker.

For a later generation used to interstates and superhighways, it's hard to imagine the excitement of transcontinental or even regional systems of roads. But in 1916 every automobile association, chamber of commerce, and tourist-oriented area was planning a "yellow brick road" to untapped riches of the suddenly motorized American. Numerous motorist magazines, whole sections of newspapers, and gorgeously colored ads in national magazines from auto manufacturers lured the public to buy a car and "See America First." Within a few years the Lincoln Highway, the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway, the Pacific Highway, and dozens of other famous roadways appeared.

Among the most popular and most promoted in the West was the Park-to-Park Highway, dreamed up the year before in Denver, established to connect all the national parks of the Rocky Mountain region and the Pacific slope. And here this association was convened at the Canyon Hotel with one of its biggest boosters, Stephen Mather, ready to give them a pep talk.

And that he did. I used to be perpetually amazed at how Mr. Mather would gradually get so wound up, so excited, as he talked. His voice would rise in pitch. He'd talk faster and faster. And then his ideas would grow, or new ones would even pop up, until they would exceed what he had started out to say.

This particular evening he was rather tired after all the sightseeing and gave a circumspect, short speech, the main theme being "don't count on the government."

I must make it clear that I regard this highway as a project to be handled by the various national park states, and by counties and municipalities therein. . . . Our work is still in the parks themselves, yours in connecting the parks; ours to encourage travel to the parks by publicity

and other methods, yours to thoughtfully assist the tourist and keep him in the right frame of mind as he goes from park to park.... May we all succeed, and in succeeding prove that the "See America First" movement is, from the point of view of health, recreation and wealth, the most important propaganda in the nation today.

The next day Mather decided that they hadn't spent enough time at Old Faithful and had seen too few eruptions of various famous geysers, so we would go back there. Everyone except Fries and me set off with Mather's checklist of geysers and a schedule for their displays. We could have thought of many better things to do, but we despondently trudged off to finish inspecting the concessions.

It's a good thing we did, for we uncovered a veritable cesspool. Fries had told me about the O. W. & W. N. Hefferlin Old Faithful Camping Company and how Inspector Hill had decided to close them down for the 1917 season. Fries suggested I see a few of them, for he was nervous that next year might be too late for some poor, unsuspecting tourists. After all, the year before a man had suffered from more than the normal ptomaine-laden meal and had shot at the cook, although fortunately his aim was thrown off, no doubt by the wormy venison about which he was complaining.

We first looked over the Old Faithful camp, which was bad enough. But Fries said, "You haven't seen the worst. Let's go back to Canyon." We did, and he was right. The camps consisted of some old tents without walls or floors, old tables, stoves, and sleeping equipment. The preparation, cooking, and serving of meals were all in one tent with no partitions between. Cooking went on near the dining tables, with provisions lying around on small tables or on the ground. Flies were abundant, and some of them were reposing on a large piece of ham. In the rear of the tent two large buckets of refuse were found uncovered, and it was evident that greasy dishwater had been carelessly thrown out of the tent on the shore of the Yellowstone River. The river apparently was also used as a latrine.

The following day was much the same for the sightseers and much the same for Amos Fries and myself. We checked out various roads, bridges, where parapets ought to be built, where trails ought to be laid out, and where and what sort of signs ought to be put up for tourist information.

We saw several interesting things along our way from Upper Geyser Basin to Thumb. First were the army engineer road gangs. I don't recall

now whether the men were being punished or hired and paid for this tough work. In any case, as it had rained hard the night before, they were in the process of "dragging" the road to smooth out the damage.

The other encounter on this road was a marvelous mother bear and her two cubs. Mama was an exceptionally large black bear, astride the center of the road, so we were forced to stop the car. She advanced on us and almost seemed to say, "Hey, I've been here since dawn. What have you got for breakfast?" Fries, who was used to this particular bear at this particular spot, yelled at her, "Don't try to hog it all. Go get your babies and then we'll give you something." She obviously understood, for she lumbered over to the edge of the lodgepole forest and immediately two cubs emerged to join her. It was a great experience for me to see the antics these three went through for the stale crackers Fries kept in the car just for an occasion like this. He had to keep warning me, though, that they might look and act cute but were, in reality, vicious wild animals.

July 27 was a date that would stick in my memory forever. When Mather and I had been in Yellowstone the year before, we had looked down at Jackson's Hole from Shoshone Point, at the south end of Yellowstone. We had been fascinated by the brief glimpse but had no time to get down there. Now I suggested we pay a visit to the area, but Mather felt it wasn't in our jurisdiction, time was short, and it would be hard on the ladies.

However, my nagging and his curiosity eventually led us to make a detour from Thumb to the Teton Valley. The road to the south gateway of Yellowstone and even to the Snake River bridge was passable, but from there on down into Jackson's Hole was terrible, absolutely impossible had it rained.

When we reached the south boundary line of Yellowstone, Mather shouted to the driver to stop. He got out of the car and studied the only sign there, put up by the Forest Service: "NORTH BOUNDARY OF THE TETON NATIONAL FOREST." Mather called to me: "Horace, make a note of this. I want a sign, right away, in front of this one, and bigger: 'SOUTH BOUNDARY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK.'" He added that an imposing gateway to the park should be built as soon as possible.

Everything was forgotten as we slowly, very slowly, picked the right ruts to drive around Jackson's Hole. On the east side of Jackson Lake the road was worthless. It was really no road at all, simply a makeshift built by the Reclamation Service to replace one from Lizard Creek to the dam. I

wrote Marshall that the Reclamation Service was to blame: tell them to fix it and charge the promoters of the dam for the cost. It was very important for us to have a decent road so that our tourists could see this magnificent area as a side trip from their visit to Yellowstone. On his return to Washington, Mather went directly to Secretary Lane about the condition of the road. Lane ordered Reclamation Director Davis to allot ten thousand dollars to build a new road. It was done. And that was how we first got our foot in the Jackson's Hole door.

Even these terrible roads were forgotten in the splendor of the lush valley, the sparkling lake, and the backdrop of the magnificent, snow-capped Teton Range. It left us all speechless. I'll never know what the others in our party were thinking, but I know I had never been more thrilled and excited. There was something about this awesome Rocky Mountain area, something about the jagged Tetons rising abruptly from this valley, that struck a deep chord in my mind and spirit. All I could think of was, "Now this is a national park!"

The journey down to Ben Sheffield's lodge near Moran was very slow. The road had been flooded out by work on the new concrete dam, after the old wooden one had been swept away. This forced us to wind our way on a trail through trees and sometimes underbrush, probably an old elk path. Finally we dropped down to the spread of log buildings and tents along the edge of Jackson Lake adjacent to the new dam. It was quite an establishment. We later learned that Sheffield had expanded tremendously since the new dam had gone in. Besides the growth of his little hunting and fishing lodge, there now were other buildings and even a post office in the great town of Moran.

We arrived just in time for a marvelous lunch in his tent dining room. His log dining room had burned down a short time before. Sheffield came in carrying a platter on which T-bone steaks were piled high, with rich juice cascading from one steak to another. While we ate, he gave a lively history and pep talk about the region and then took us out on Jackson Lake for a panoramic view of forest-clad foothills and the Tetons towering above.

We came back in time to freshen up and enjoy another delicious meal. Afterward we sat outside, almost silent, in awe of the twilight creeping over the mountains, shutting out all but the sharp, jagged edges of that magnificent horizon of peaks.

A good night's sleep and a hearty "cowboy" breakfast readied us for the struggle back to Yellowstone. Reaching Thumb, we left our cars and

rode back across the lake on the steamboat Jean D. It was a most enjoyable cruise with about forty passengers on board. Mather loved it so much that he instantly envisioned building a beautiful boathouse below the Lake Hotel and running larger boats back and forth on a stepped-up schedule. Along with this idea he thought that transportation could be arranged to pick up tourists at the south end and detour them down to the Jackson Hole for a night at Sheffield's. As soon as he got to Mammoth, he summoned the officials of the boat company to organize his plans, which turned out to be vastly too expensive unless tourist travel increased enormously.

Our whole trip went wonderfully well until near the end. Solicitor Vogelsang hadn't been feeling too well, had forgone the Teton trip, and blamed his troubles on the high altitude of Yellowstone. At Mammoth Mather didn't like his continuing problem and asked Colonel Brett to call in the army doctor. After a thorough examination, the doctor reported that Vogelsang was experiencing a heart attack and should get away from Yellowstone as rapidly as possible. Mather immediately packed him up and took him to a hospital in Ogden. The prompt action probably saved his life, made possible his swift recovery, and gave him those extra years as first assistant secretary of the interior (1916-21), during which he lent us such a helping hand.

Mather stayed in Ogden only long enough to see Vogelsang out of the woods. Then he went on to San Francisco. With Mather gone and the Thompsons off to Denver, I gathered up the Purdys and Mrs. Mather and took them back home to Chicago, then went on alone to Washington. As the train pulled into Union Station on August 3 at 4:40 P.M., my first sight was my lovely Grace waiting for me on the platform.

Aside from having to leave my wife alone again, the trip to Yellowstone had been a wonderful interlude. Not only had it been a tension-breaker, but it also was a marvelous learning experience. For the first time, I had been able to see exactly how a national park functioned under reasonable management, how poorly concessions were handled, how much improvement was needed in ordinary facilities such as roads, how transportation operated, how average American tourists used a park, and how they managed to survive the pitfalls of a system without central organization. Yosemite had only been an example of everything going wrong. Now I felt I had an insight into how a national park service could take hold of the helter-skelter conglomeration and turn it into a finely honed system. I also recognized that the hardest work was still ahead.

With all this knowledge, there was absolutely no time, no organization, no money to do anything about it. It would have to wait until our bureau was created. And Mather had laid it directly on my shoulders to see that the Smoot-Kent bill could be passed and signed into law this year. He was not very hopeful and decided to stay in the West until fall. I was determined not to be waylaid on other matters, just somehow to force that bill through the Congress.